WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A method of automatically determining a device's nickname the method , comprising:

recognizing a first device that has been connected to a network without being assigned a nickname;

selecting a nickname for the recognized first device from a recommended nickname table which is also connected to the network; and

registering information regarding the selected nickname.

2.   The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of recognizing the first device is performed such that the first device connected to the network requests determination of its own nickname.

3.   The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of recognizing the first device is performed such that the first device connected to the network causes a second device connected to the network to request determination of a nickname for the first device.

4.   The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of recognizing the first device is performed such that a second device connected to the network searches for the first device connected to the network and requests determination of a nickname for the first device.

5.   The method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, further comprising:

determining whether a nickname identical to the selected nickname has already been registered;

if a nickname identical to the selected nickname has already been registered, selecting a nickname different from the already registered nickname from the recommended nickname table or other recommended nickname tables; and

if a nickname identical to the selected nickname has not yet been registered, registering the selected nickname.

6.   The method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, further comprising:

if it cannot be determined whether a nickname identical to the selected nickname has already been registered, using the selected nickname;

if it subsequently becomes possible to determine whether the nickname identical to the selected nickname has already been registered, performing the determination at that time;

if a nickname identical to the selected nickname has already been registered, selecting a nickname different from the already registered nickname from the recommended nickname table or other nickname tables; and

if a nickname identical to the selected nickname has not yet been registered, registering the selected nickname.

7.   A method of avoiding redundant nicknames for devices in a network, the method comprising:

causing a first device with a nickname, and that is connected to the network, to determine whether a nickname identical to the nickname for the first device has already been registered; and

if a nickname identical to the nickname for the first device has already been registered and the already registered nickname is a nickname for a second device different from the first device, requesting that a new nickname be assigned to the first device; and

if a nickname identical to the nickname for the first device has not yet been registered, registering the nickname for the first device.

8.   The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein if a nickname identical to the nickname for the first device has already been registered and the already registered nickname is the nickname for the first device, the nickname for the first device is used without additional registration of the nickname for the first device.

9.   A method of avoiding redundant nicknames for devices in a network, the method comprising:

recognizing a first device that has been connected to the network without being assigned a nickname;

selecting a nickname for the recognized first device from a recommended nickname table or a plurality of synchronized recommended nickname tables connected to the network, and inactivating the selected nickname so that other devices cannot select the selected nickname from the recommended nickname table or the plurality of synchronized recommended nickname tables; and

registering the selected nickname.

10.   The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the step of recognizing the first device is performed such that the first device connected to the network requests determination of its own nickname.

11.   The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the step of recognizing the first device is performed such that the first device connected to the network causes a second

device connected to the network to request determination of a nickname for the first device.

12.   The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the step of recognizing the first device is performed such that a second device connected to the network searches for the first device connected to the network and requests determination of a nickname for the first device.

13.   A network system, comprising:

a recommended nickname table operable to store nicknames for devices connected to a network;

devices connected to the network and that have their nicknames selected from the recommended nickname table; and

a nickname registration-managing module for registering the selected nicknames for the devices if there are no nicknames that have already been registered and that are identical to the nicknames of the devices that have been selected from the recommended nickname table.

14.   A device, comprising:

a discovery protocol by which the device, which is connected to a network, informs other devices in the network that the device itself is being connected to the network, or other devices are caused to be aware that the device itself has been connected to the network; and

a nickname determination-requesting protocol operable to enable the device connected to the network to request determination of its own nickname.

15.   The device as claimed in claim 14, further comprising a recommended nickname table operable to store its own nickname or nicknames for other devices.

16. The device as claimed in claim 14 or 15, further comprising a nickname registration-managing module operable to store nicknames if its own nickname or nicknames for other devices are not identical with already registered nicknames.